

Morse but were turned back short of the summit.

We continued up the Wright Glacier, crossing into British Columbia. Our packs were now much heavier as we were carrying 21 days of food for the rest of the trip. The upper part of the Wright Glacier is a ski mountaineer's paradise with numerous peaks that can be climbed or approached on skis. From two different base camps we climbed the following peaks: Peak 2200* (grid reference 970787), Peak 2160 (014793), Peak 2240 (031727), Peak 2280 (039692), Peak 2120 (966655) and Peak 2080 (987648). Our packs now much lighter, we continued on the traverse. From the head of the Wright Glacier we descended a steep headwall to reach the gentle glacier feeding the Sutlahine River. A huge climb on rock-hard snow the next day took us up Peak 2040 (174743) in the next mountain group eastward. Continuing eastward we climbed the outstanding peaks southwest of Tunjony Lake, Peak 2304 and Peak 2345, as well as the lesser Peak 2040 (208750).

On Day 16 and 17 bad weather confined us to our tents. The weather continued to be poor the next day. We felt like making some progress so we bypassed the next mountain group by traveling in a lightly forested valley to the north. In the valley spring had begun and we had some interesting moments skiing along partially snow-covered beaver dams.

We regained the alpine east of North Chechidla Creek and traversed this range in a southerly direction. We climbed Peak 2200 (427624), Peak 2110 (403599) and Peak 2384 (381588). From near Peak 2384 we dropped eastward into an unnamed valley. We followed this valley southward, enjoying views of the impressive north face of Peak 2470. From this valley we made a long side trip to climb the attractive pyramidal Peak 2346 located 14 kilometers northeast of Whiting Lake.

The final leg of our traverse led eastward toward the mine and airstrip at Bearskin Lake. In this range we climbed Peak 2629 south of Tatsamenie Lake. On day 27 we descended to the mine. The crew there was very friendly and fed us a very hearty lunch before we were picked up for a flight back to Juneau.

This ski traverse connects with a north-south traverse of the Stikine Icecap (from the Great Glacier to Bearskin Lake) that Sheffield, Williams and I, along with three others, completed in 1993. This provides a continuous alpine traverse, mostly on glacier between the Stikine and Taku Rivers.

MARKUS KELLERHALS, *Alpine Club of Canada*

*Elevations from American maps in feet, Canadian maps in meters.

Ragged Range, Mount Nirvana, East Face. While sitting atop the summits of the Cirque of the Unclimbables in 1960, the late Bill Buckingham noted a particularly fine group of peaks 20 miles farther to the south. The central peak of this group is Mount Nirvana, which at 9,097 feet is the highest mountain in the Northwest Territories of Canada. This then led to Buckingham's first expedition to this portion of the Ragged Range. After completely circling Mount Nirvana, Buckingham and Lew Surdam found a weakness to the north and made the first ascent in 1965 (*AAJ*, 1966, pp. 33-37). This route was repeated only once, in 1975 (*AAJ*, 1976, pp. 320-325). Nirvana has apparently been unclimbed by this or any other route in the past 21 years. Two expeditions have viewed the walls and ramparts of the east face, but both decided against attempting an ascent.

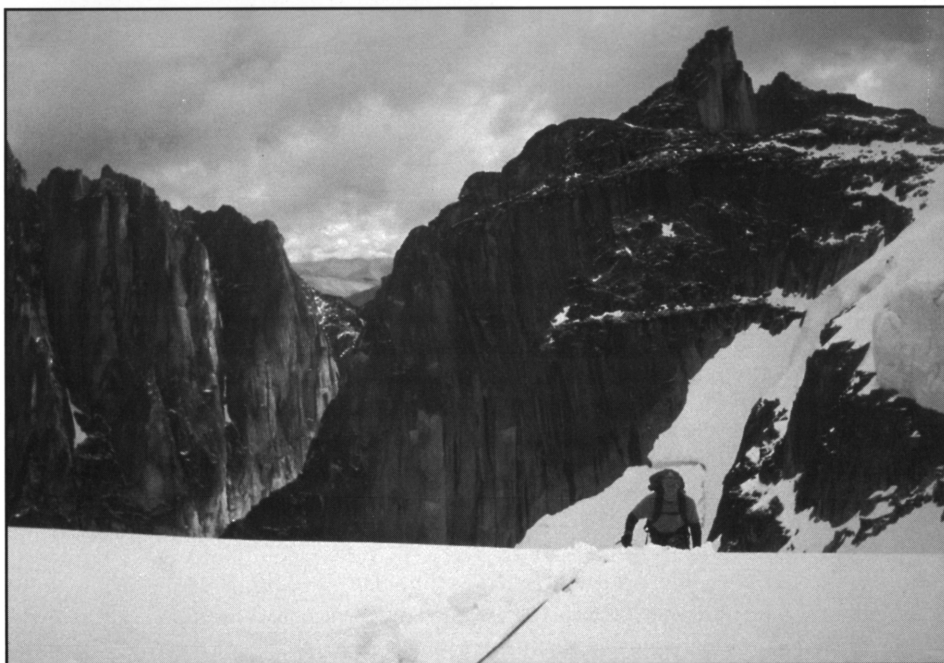
On July 13, Jack, Dan, Tom and Hope Bennett landed on an unnamed lake about 20 miles east of Nirvana and began a rugged five-day trek over two high passes to reach a summit camp at the foot of the Nirvana glacier. Our ascent, the first from the east, took place on July 19. We easily



climbed the glacier, crossed the bergschrund, and mounted the lower portion of the face. The most difficult section was a near-vertical 500-foot high band of granite leading up to the left end of a broad snow ledge. The crux was a delicate traverse right to reach a new crack. After moving 150 feet right on the ledge, a moderate series of cracks led diagonally up to the left toward detached flakes. With a final strenuous pull-up in a chock-filled chimney, we reached the south ridge. From here an airy walk along a knife-edged snow arête led to the summit and the cairn built by Buckingham in 1965.

The summit of Mount Nirvana stands at the apex of three razor-thin knife edges, falling away in great arcs, curving like outstretched arms around the deeply gouged cirques below. For Buckingham

Left: Mt. Nirvana from the east. Below: Tom Bennett topping the nunatak north of Nirvana. The peak behind him is Hydra; the rampart to the left is the east face of Warrior.
Jack Bennett



31 years ago, a rainbow appeared momentarily to accentuate the beauty of this supremely wild and forgotten domain.

After rappelling down the face in the blue-gray of the near-arctic night, we crawled into our sleeping bags 28 hours after leaving them. On our trek out, we made the second ascent of Nightwind Peak, and also climbed two other unnamed mountains east of Nirvana.

JACK BENNETT

Mount Proboscis, Grendel. From mid-July to August, Chris Righter, Greg Epperson, Chris Kalous and I established *Grendel* (VI 5.10 A4) on the southeast face of Mount Proboscis, which followed a thin seam between *Yukon Tears* and the *Original Route*. The route was climbed over eight days capsule-style. Fifteen pitches were climbed, eight rivets were placed and 60-meter ropes used. The team attempted a second new route but got shut down by 16 consecutive days of snow and rain. This was the fifth route on the southeast face and the last obvious line.

KEVIN DANIELS, *unaffiliated*

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Traverse of Axel Heiberg Island, Northwest Territories. In July, 1995, the traverse of Axel Heiberg Island was accomplished between Mokka Fjord and Strand Fjord, crossing the Princess Margaret Range through the canyon lands and across the mesas and polar icefields. Peak 5500 of the Interior Divide was climbed from the eastern glacial arm to the southeast ridge. With unusually warm temperatures in the high 60s, the glacial rivers were ominously difficult to cross. Unfossilized tertiary tree trunks were found and mapped on the Strand River along with a number of gargantuan waterfalls. Climbs in the bizarre salt peaks of the east coast were accomplished as well. The expedition included ten members. It was led by Dr. Ruthmary Deuel and Dennis Schmitt.

DENNIS SCHMITT

CANADIAN ROCKIES

Eastpost Spire, South Face. Urban Golob and Slavko Rozic (Slovenia) climbed a new route, *Mountain Fairy Tale* (300 meters, 5.9 A3) on the south face of Eastpost Spire and dedicated it to the late Vanja Furlan.

MIHA PETERNEL, *Planinska zveza Slovenije*

Crescent Tower. On the Crescent Tower, Urban Golob and Slavko Rozic climbed a new route, *West Side Story* (270 meters, III 5.10a).

MIHA PETERNEL, *Planinska zveza Slovenije*

North Howser Tower, West Face, First Free Ascent. On the evening of August 14, Kennan Harvey and I hiked to the Bugaboo Snowpatch Col on the way to the remote west face of the North Howser Tower. The next morning we descended to the base of the face. Prior to our attempt, a two-week dry spell left the rock relatively dry and perfect for free climbing. At the base of the face, a family of goats stood at the bottom of *All Along the Watchtower*. We climbed the first 10 pitches (up to 5.10) through nice cracks. We traversed off the *Watchtower* route to bivy at a snowpatch that provided water. The next morning, instead of downclimbing to the route, we did a long pitch of exposed 5.10 face climbing to reach the *Watchtower* dihedral. The corner that had not previously been entirely freed is 800 feet long and turned out to be sustained